

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 02201 042144Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 PA-02 SAB-02
/053 W

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R 041802Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6377
INFO PANCANAL
USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 2201

DEPT FOR ARA/PAF AND PAN

USCINCSO FOR J-2 AND PAO

PANCANAL FOR IO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PN
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTIONS

THE FOLLOWING SENT FROM ICA/PANAMA ACTION USINFO WASHDC INFO
SECSTATE DATED 04 APRIL 1978 REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO

QUOTE

MEDIA REACTION

1. PANAMA CITY -- COVERAGE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S TRIP HAS FOLLOWED
PATTERN FROM BEGINNING OF STRAIGHT PAGE ONE WIRE SERVICE REPORTING
WITHOUT COMMENT. THIS FIRST DAY AFTER PRESIDENT'S RETURN TO
WASHINGTON, ONLY SEMI-INDEPENDENT LA ESTRELLA AND STAR & HERALD
FRONT-PAGED, LA ESTRELLA WITH SPREAD HEAD: "RESULTS OF CARTER
MISSION STUDIED: CARTER SATISFIED WITH RECENT RIPT." GOVERNMENT-
CONTROLLED CRITICA DID NOT CARRY STORY AND STABLE MATE MATUTINO
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RAN A TASS WASHINGTON DATELINE STORY ON PAGE 3-B WITH SPREAD
HEAD: "CARTER TRIED TO SOFTEN GORWING DISCONTENT WITH U.S.
POLICY."

2. ON THE TREATY SCENE, COLUMNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED
PRESS CONTINUE TO HIT AWAY AT THE NEUTRALITY TREATY, FOR
EXAMPLE MIGUEL ANGEL MORENO GONGORA IN HIS "CONCIENCIA PUBLICA"

COLUMN ON PAGE 6-A IN MATUTINO. THE SAME MORENO DEDICATED TWO ENTIRE COLUMNS LAST WEEK TO THE TEXT OF REMARKS BY SENATOR DECONCINI ON THE SENATE FLOOR MARCH 16. ACCORDING TO MORENO, THE NUNN AMENDMENT "ATTEMPTS TO CONVERT THAT IRREVOCABLE POSITION OF THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE INTO AN OBLIGATION TO DISCUSS, NO MATTER WHAT, WHATEVER AMERICAN PROPOSALS AIMED AT IMPOSING THE PRESENCE OF ARMED FORCES IN OUR TERRITORY... ANY ATTEMPT TO CONVERT THAT 'CONDITION' INTO SOMETHING ACCEPTABLE (POTABLE) WOULD CONSTITUTE A NEW BUNAU VARILLA SCANDAL."

3. MORENO LATER PLEADS FOR THE RETURN OF ALL EXILES, CONCLUDING: "THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE A NEW PROPOSAL FOR THE RETURN OF ALL PANAMANIAN WHO SUFFER THE RIGORS OF AN UNJUST EXILE, BECAUSE IF IT IS WAITING FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES BY THE U.S. SENATE TO ALLOW "THE NEXT DAY" THE ENTRANCE OF ALL THE REPATRIATES, THAT 'NEXT DAY' WILL NEVER ARRIVE BECAUSE THE TREATIES WILL NOT HAVE BEEN APPROVED, WITH THE CHANGES THE 100 SENATORS HAVE MADE. NO SENSIBLE PANAMANIAN WILL EVER BE ABLE TO ACCEPT AS GOOD, THE TREATIES AS THE AMERICANS WANT TO IMPOSE THEM ON US."

4. THE MATUTINO EDIT OF APRIL 4 FOLLOWS THE GOP "WAIT AND SEE" LINE, BUT QUESTIONS WHETHER OTHER NATIONS WILL APPROVE THE NEUTRALITY PACT. IN ITS EDIT ENTITLED, "RE-OPENING OF THE DEBATES," MATUTINO PREDICTS THAT THE TREATY PROPONENTS WILL HAVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN THE FORM OF AMENDMENTS AND RESERVATIONS

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TO THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY TRANSFORMING IT AS WAS DONE WITH THE NEUTRALITY PACT INTO SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE PANAMANIAN PEOPLE APPROVED IN THE PLEBISCITE. MATUTINO THEN CONCLUDES: "... THEY COULD REACH THE EXTREME THAT EVEN THOUGH PANAMA MAY ACCEPT IT, IT WOULD NOT BE APPROVED BY THE OTHER NATIONS... WHICH COULD WELL DETERMINE THAT THERE IS NO REASON THEY SHOULD BE SIGNATORIES OF THE 'NEUTRALITY' PACT BECAUSE, IN PRACTICE, THAT TREATY GRANTS EXCLUSIVE CONCESSIONS TO ONE NATION AND NEVER THE EXPRESSION OF NEUTRALITY THAT WOULD BECOME THE GREATEST DEFENSIVE WEAPON IN FAVOR OF THE PANAMA CANAL." ITEM UNQUOTE

JORDEN

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